

SEVEN
SUMMERS

A Book of Poems

by

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THE FAIR

The fair from a distance is a wonderful sight, with a childhood glint and a mystical glow

That strokes the night with a firework brush and a dose of terror from a rickety old ride.

The wind carries memorable smells on it's back; popcorn, machine-oil and blue-ribbon cows,

Big piles of sawdust that cover the messes; all getting ripe in the hot August sun.

Liars and cheats and thieves run the show, but today I don't seem to mind a good fleecing;

It makes me forget that money's my master, as it should when time slips away behind joy.

Screaming with fear, all the kids beg for more, as grown-ups scramble for shade and some beer.

The hot sticky ground creates popular benches, and candy floss dreams start to bud in the night.

Angry new teenagers collect in the darkness, snuggling into their rock hard cocoons;

Content to leave childish summers behind, while inside they mourn the loss of their youth.

In years to come they'll be back to recapture what they so hastily left behind in that season;

Chasing life backwards like old smoky remnants of the firework's shadowy grey spider clouds.

Our town's cycle turns like a huge lighted wheel, coming back around to make us remember;

Reminding us not to stray far from our hearts;
The fair from a distance is a wonderful sight.

EXCEPTION

The fog made buildings disappear

But couldn't hide your face.

The rain washed the city clean

But couldn't erase your memory.

The wind blew through the trees

**And through the place that was my
heart.**

The sun warmed everything on earth,

But me.

LESSONS

I dug up the garden

When I was five;

I buried my butterfly -

He died.

My father spanked me,

Then he cried -

When my mother

Told him why,

I dug up the garden

When I was five.

STOLEN YOUTH

I've changed;

Collapsed

And grown back.

I've died

Inside.

Outside

Knelt by bedsides:

Felt pain,

Hers and mine;

Still young.

My youth dragged

As hers sped by;

Racing.

Prematurely gone

To a cold dark hole.

Now I'm left,

Stripped alive.

Alive

At least;

At least alive.

MY PEACE

**I let her sleep a lot today;
It was easier than taking her out,
Always running the risk of something,
Something that could kill her.
Not that it wouldn't bring her peace,
But staying alive's the thing to do.
So unattractive to be dead;
So complicated and terrible.
She loved to live, to be awake;
It seemed a shame to waste her day.
But in her sleep I found my peace,
And now my peace will last forever.**

STOIC

Camouflaged by distance

And flanked by a disillusioned past,

He wept by night;

And by day stood tall and deliberate.

All his body could do was to follow

As his soul raged;

All his mind could do was spin.

Fooling everyone but himself

He plodded on - and on - and on;

Never believing himself,

Always wondering why.

Leaving all his joy

Years behind

In a tiny box under his bed.

FATHERLESS CHILDREN

Incandescent life

Angry

White hot

Insignificant death

Violent

Bone cold

Society corrupted

Warped

Wrung dry

Fatherless children

Killing

Need love

THE CITY

My eyes wandered down
And found the street I slept on.
I'd avoided contact
For fear of reliving
The days I left behind.
Cruel and unusual punishment
For something I'd done
In lives before.
I pushed my gaze back up to now
And breathed again.
Columns plastered high
Crushed the air
And pierced the clouds,
Dwarfing all my senses
Except the one
That constantly misses you.

THE DAY BEFORE FIVE

She went downstairs to cook breakfast

And found her husband dead on the couch.

She tried to revive him as her daughter looked on,

But he would stay dead regardless.

He sat drunk and lonely when they all went to bed,

Watching T.V. alone in the dark;

Wondering how he got trapped by a family,

Losing his edge, his manhood, his spark.

But how could he just let his little girl watch

As her daddy went stiff and then cold?

And how could he not want to see her sweet face

The next day when she turned five years old?

FUSED

My mood grew thick

An unbreakable mold.

My core went cold

When my heart fell sick.

When I saw your face

Mine froze confused.

Our spirits fused

In that one space.

MY FRIEND

For twenty years
I carried that bastard;
Dead weight
And an anchor to my soul.
Every spark of life
I tried to ignite,
He'd spit venom
At the live kindling;
Killing it.
I shed him
Like the itchy skin
Of a monster,
The weight
Of his oppression gone.
I drop him with
The thud of a thousand stars
And purge myself
Of his evil.

OUR ENEMIES

I cried as the moon waned.

I knew that when the sky went dark

That mothers and babies would die

At the hands of my government.

I screamed for them to stop,

But they weren't in the mood to listen;

They'd been making plans with devils

And setting fire to freedom.

Blindfolded and raped by liars and thieves,

We laid down confused and beaten;

Watching helplessly as the bombs fell

On families - our enemies.

GRANDMAS CHAIR

Waiting to die, Curled up in that chair,
I tried to say something But she wasn't there
She'd been placed on a shelf With her hummels and knickknacks;
Just a shell of herself And she wouldn't be back.
She'd just stare into space With a lonely old face,
Her whole life misplaced; All her memories erased.
The T.V. was turned up To drown out her cry,
That would never go quiet And never go dry.
Her stubborn streak played out For ninety some years,
Refusing to perish; Her single most fear.
Her second most fear Was losing her mind,
The one thing she'd struggled Her whole life to find.
When she lost her own mother She was blinded by grief;
She never recovered, She called God a thief.
She was barely a mother And barely a wife;
She'd focused on *her* needs For most of her life.
She seemed quite determined Not to meet her own fate,
So he shut off her brain
And she stepped through the gate.

SELFISH

Tethered to your nightmare
By strands of kidnaped time,
I compare your love to poison
As you let your darkness shine.
Withered from a hellish hole,
Entranced to wait for something more;
Content to rupture every pore,
A blackheart veil protects your soul.
But you in shadow wait by day,
By night enrage my fragile heart;
To take me down to dwell apart,
From all that's noble right and well.
How could you knowing where I'd been,
Partake in raping spirit pure
And smear my heart across the floor,
For selfish glory's cross you bear?

MY SECRET CRUSH

Crushed;

Battered and bruised.

Flushed;

What do I do?

Hushed;

By the sight of you.

Crushed.

ONE OF THEM

A collection of blank and soulless stares,

A burning pile of broken chairs;

They gathered there to sell their wares

And everyone was buying.

The feathered few that really mattered

Couldn't hear the mindless clatter;

They remained anonymous and scattered,

So as not to be detected.

And after being away so long,

Now beckoned back by a secret song;

They finally feel like they belong,

Now I thank God I'm one of them.

PARASITE

The pervasive leech
Tried to sneak back in.
My soul's parasite;
He's always out there.
He waits until I'm vulnerable,
Then he starts in;
Complimenting my poetry,
Stroking what's left of my ego.
He wants to devour me;
He wants to become me.
He wants me to become him,
To join in his misery.
Not this time oh mighty one;
I'm stronger than you now.
Maybe in another life;
But not this one - it's mine.

MY GUITAR

My guitar sat quietly,

Not screaming,

Not weeping;

Just quietly sitting.

It only needed me,

Never wanted me.

It only loved me

When I let it sing.

It looked at me

With it's one round eye;

Still steel wires

Longing to ring.

A song inside

Without escape;

The second fiddle

Would have to wait.

THAT POOR WOMAN

She worked in that restaurant for most of her life;

Never a mother, Never a wife.

She was happy and bitter and Irish.

Martyrdom seemed to run in her blood;

Her emotions would bottle up,

Then suddenly flood.

She was happy and bitter and Irish.

After some vodka her eyes would get glazed;

And after some more, Her tongue went ablaze.

She was happy and bitter and Irish.

Any pressure or stress, the poor thing would stutter;

A old scar from her father, Her uncle or mother.

She was happy and bitter and Irish.

She was smart, she was funny and quite complicated;

At times she was kind But universally hated.

She was happy and bitter and Irish.

She'd been raped by the world but never been touched;

She'd laugh just a little, Then a little too much.

She was happy and bitter and Irish.

She's a sad microcosm of the human condition;

And though hollow and empty, It may be her mission;

To be happy and bitter and Irish.

THE MOON

My fingers danced
By the light of the moon;
Casting hard shadows
Of building and trees.
Content to orbit
And never to fall;
Fulfilling dreams
And saving ships at night.
Misunderstood
For so long;
It stood strong for love
And for children's wishes.
A backdrop for lovers
Who claimed it for theirs;
And yet just a rock
Reflecting the sun.

DAWN

The little town slept sweetly,
Nestled under a blanket of white fog.
Fuzzy streetlights whispered soft;
Like the heads of angels,
Misty eyed with joy.
Distant sounds could reach me now,
And find me silently laughing.
Confusing my thoughts with dreams,
I'd wake and sleep;
My mind content to drift and dance.

HIS WATCH

He wound his watch every day

But never wore it.

She made him save it for good

But good never came.

He died and left the watch to me,

Now I wear it every day.

DOGMA

Addicted to dogma

But searching for more,

The little boy paced

Back and forth on the floor;

He finally lacked nothing

While nothing was his,

As he laughed

And he danced through the is.

TOO LONG

He complained about the French-toast.

She spit back a familiar insult

That he pretended not to hear;

As he did with most of her bitterness.

They were married forty years too long.

I'm sure their love was once vibrant and alive;

Brimming with passion

And warm hearted conversation.

Now they walk alone

In empty shadows of each other;

Living the rest of their lives -

Lonely.

THE FLAME

Time measured by love

Is love not measured by time.

Always dancing - never still,

The painter's brush,

The writer's quill;

Does skip across the perfect page

Of grace and glorious flowing age.

Territories yet uncharted

Unfold to the openhearted;

Yet in categories scattered,

Listless lives that never mattered.

All a web of woven gold;

Unanswered secrets never told.

Victory parties, catered weddings,

Rings and pins in jeweled settings;

But truth we find is not forgetting

The reason that we chose the game

Is not the candle but the flame.

STEED

I rode through fields
Of wheat and storm,
My best friend strode
Beneath me torn;
To carry me
Tormented joy,
Careful not to destroy his spirit.
He loved me like his mother;
His soul was gentle and giving.
I gave him everything I had,
But I couldn't save him.
When the big truck took him
I cried all night;
And months and years.
My tears went dry
Before my sorrow.

AFRAID

I just sat there for a year;
Condemned,
And paralyze with fear.
It felt bad to be alone;
Silent,
In the twilight zone.
I guess I needed a little rest;
Still,
A quite unsightly mess.
With no one really to blame
But me;
Afraid,
To be or not to be.

YOU

Birth - once.

Death - once.

Love - once.

You - once.

SUMMER

I woke up to the smell of peaches;

Summer must be in bloom.

Mars is on the rise in the north;

Summer must be in bloom.

The blacktop's too hot for my bare feet;

Summer must be in bloom.

There's no place to park at the beach;

Summer must be in bloom.

My heart aches for love again;

Summer must be in bloom.

THE LAST SUNDAY

A full moon played canvas
As the fair finally died;
The powder-man pulled out
All the stops to compete,
As the finale rolled and rumbled
Over a worn out town.
Tomorrow the big cranes
Would pull summer up by it's roots
And chase the drunken crowds away
For another year.

SUMMER'S GONE

Summer seemed shorter again this year;
Why can't they just leave the poor clocks alone
And let the last long days take their natural course.
To die with dignity without manual assistance.
Someone had a fire in their fireplace last night;
How could it already smell like Christmas?
Then I remembered that I was in California
Where Autumn amounted to one windy day.
A column of Harleys flowed down 101 south;
Like a river of angry rats running from the cold.
They didn't seem so tough from a mile away;
As I watched from the relative safety of my hilltop.
Pretty soon the sail-boats will all be wrapped up
And the sand won't burn my little girl's feet.
Big towels will give way to bundled up poets
Trolling the beaches for old washed up rhymes.
When ocean-towns loose the bright light of summer
Their offerings soon become subtle and rare.
Diamonds return to coal, fueling the winter;
Leaving the long shadows in charge for a while.
Faces turn inward with lingering sun-tans;
Wondering where their next dollar will come from.
Just in time another summer's gone;
Thirsty for rain and five o'clock nights.
I'll soon find another season of memories to share
As reminders drop like red and gold leaves;
Pressing my thoughts between pages like flowers,
They'll always come back to bloom in due time.